



His Excellency
STEVEN JOHN RAICA
By the grace of God and the Apostolic See
Bishop of Birmingham in Alabama

**DECREE
EXTENDING THE DISPENSATION
DUE TO COVID-19**

In accordance with canons 87 § 1 and 90 of the Code of Canon Law, I make the following provision, recognizing that infection rates for COVID-19 remain generally high in the territory of the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama and that the dispensation I previously extended on November 22, 2020 shall soon expire, on January 10, 2021:

I hereby extend the dispensation from the obligation to assist at Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation through Sunday, March 14, 2021 (inclusive) – the 4th Sunday of Lent (Lætare Sunday) – for all the Roman Catholic faithful who reside or are visiting and present in the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama.

In the last extension, I encouraged everyone to evaluate the risks they take and return to church, if they have not already and if it was prudent to do so. I know that many heeded my request and that our parishes had and are still having wonderful Christmas celebrations. In the meantime, a spike in cases of COVID-19 in Alabama has continued. Though my teaching remains unchanged and I again warmly encourage all to benefit from corporate worship in our parishes while taking the indicated precautions from health authorities (social distancing, wearing of masks, sanitizing hands), I also judge that it is best to extend the dispensation at the present time.

Given at the Diocesan Chancery in Birmingham on the 5th of January, the Memorial of Saint John Neumann, in the Year of the Lord 2021.

+ Steven J. Raica

Most Reverend Steven J. Raica
Bishop of Birmingham in Alabama

BW Jerabek
Very Reverend Bryan W. Jerabek
Chancellor